

OCTOBER 25, 2005 / ENTERTAINMENT

The Vows

You never daydreamed about your wedding, you issued no ring-or-else ultimatums, and you certainly wouldn't shop online for a dress before he popped the question. So how come engagement has turned you into that girl?

Take a vow (or twelve) to get reacquainted with your old self. After all, you don't want anyone else (even your bridal alter ego) to overshadow your big day.

Vow No. 1 — Learn Your Stuff

I, (name), take you, The Wedding Workshop, a five-week series of classes at Botanicals, starting January 19, to be my trusted resource, learning inside tricks from the best of the best like Birch Design Studio and Beauty on Call.

Vow No. 2 — Day-of Wedding Coordinator

For (month, day, year), the day of my wedding, I, (name), will hire Parties Etc. to take over and run the show. They will tell my bridesmaids where to be and keep the caterer on time, so I don't lose my mind or my friends (312-491-0028; info@partiesetcetera.com).

Vow No. 3 — Flowers

I, (name), give you, A Vision Chicago, complete artistic control to create floral arrangements that wow my guests. With experience doing flowers for some of the best restos and events in town (Green Zebra, Madhatter's Ball), you will make the day a sight to see (773-227-5700; info@avisionchicago.com).

Vow No. 4 — Invitations

Together with Alyson Beaton, I, (name), will choose from one of her seven unique designs or allow her genius to inspire a custom letterpress invite (773-292-0840; design@alysonbeaton.com).

Vow No. 5 — Caterers

From apps to din din, I, (name), promise to trust Limelight Catering to serve dishes that not only taste good but are also good for you. After all, co-owner Rita Gutekanst sits on the board of Chicago's Green Market and uses the freshest ingredients from eco-friendly and local producers (2000 North Racine Avenue; 773-883-3080).

Vow No. 6 — Photographer

I, (name), give permission to KingenSmith's husband-and-wife team, Rick and Heather, to photograph me and other aspects of my wedding. With an editorial eye and an artistic bent, they'll put together a custom-designed Wedding Day Diary for us to enjoy for years to come (773-278-8401; info@kingensmith.com).

Vow No. 7 — The Cake

When we cut the cake, I, (name), will put an end to my crash diet and devour a piece of homemade goodness from Two Tarts Cake Company. And since they never use fondant, I will actually be able to smear the sweet cream icing all over my groom's face (773-655-5897; info@twotartscake.com).

Vow No. 8 — Music

I, (name), will do my due diligence and explore all the options on Book Live Music, indulging my mother-in-law's wish for a vocalist at the ceremony and my fiancé's request for disco at the reception.

Vow No. 9 — The Gown

I, (name), recognize that designer dresses can cost a pretty penny and will be open to the idea of a never- or once-worn dress (Elie Saab, Monique Lhuillier, Vera Wang) from White Chicago. I will also consider putting my dress on consignment after the big day, so someone else can enjoy it as much as I did (222 West Huron Street; 312-397-1571). Additionally, I will treat my feet to a pair of Blue Tux Shoes, dyeable and metallic options that aren't prom-dress cheesy or Jimmy Choo pricey.

Vow No. 10 — The Attendants

I, (name), understand that my friends want to look their best and will send them to Thread for dresses that fit, flatter, and flirt (65 East Oak Street, suite 2F; 312-475-0180). I will also put our flower girl on solid fashion footing with a dress from Neige, a children's line started by former Vera Wang designer Adrienne Catrina (Zozo for Kids, 1920 West Montrose Avenue; 773-506-6120).

Vow No. 11 — Keepsake

I, (name), know that the moment will go by in a flash. Therefore, I will work with Lindsay Totaro to create a custom piece of art that incorporates my dress, invitation, and other wedding details (Urbane Weddings, 1920 North Damen Avenue; 773-289-3000).

Vow No. 12 — Groom

I, (name), pledge, to thee, (name of groom), that I will once again be the girl you fell in love with — for both our sakes and sanity.